

[Home](#) > [Wahhabism, 2nd Edition Revised, Edited And Annotated](#) > [5. Valuable Effects Of Ziyarat Of The Graves Of Religious Personalities](#) > Reasonings Of Wahhabis About Prohibition Of Journey Towards Ziyarat Of Graves

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## 5. Valuable Effects Of Ziyarat Of The Graves Of Religious Personalities

The graves which attract the worshippers of God from all over the world and in particular the Muslims, are the graves of those who had a divine mission in the society and they fulfilled their mission befittingly. These people consist of:

1. Prophets and religious leaders who carried the divine message upon their shoulders and guided the people by giving their own lives, property and blood of their dear ones and bore the hardships and difficulties in this path.
2. Great scholars who, like a bright candle, have spread light to their surroundings and have labored in research and left behind a great treasure by the name of knowledge and wisdom in the service of mankind. They have acquainted men with the Divine Book, the Book of Nature and the language of creation and have laid the foundation of religious, human and natural sciences.
3. The group of people whose cup of patience had been overflowing from the social oppression, ever-increasing injustices and unfair discrimination. They are those who have put their life at stake against the oppressive rulers and washed with their blood the cruelties prevalent in the society (martyrs in the path of Islam). No revolution and reform in society will remain worthless and the significance of a holy revolution that wishes to bring down the palaces of the oppressors and suffocate them, is the holy blood of those combatants who wished to bring Justice, Equity, Liberty and freedom back to the society.

It is they to whom the people go for their *ziyarat* and shed tears near their graves or shrines and remember their valuable services and their holy sacrifices. By reciting some *Surahs* from the Qur'an they soothe their souls and by reciting poems about their sacrifices, lofty human merits and exalted morals, they enliven their memories and their school of thought and invite the people to follow their path.

*Ziyarat* of graves of such group of people is one kind of thanksgiving and appreciation of their heroism

and self-sacrifices. It is a warning to the contemporary generation that the reward of the person who selects the true path and gives his or her life while defending true beliefs and propagating freedom and liberty is that he or she will never be forgotten.

The passage of time which turns everything old and extinct not only does not make their memories to fade or disappear but causes the flames of love to glow more in the pure and sincere hearts. Thus how good it is that the contemporary generation and the future generations too follow their path since they have seen with their own eyes the rewards of the sacrifices of the men of truth. What was said till now has acquainted us with the importance of honoring the great religious personalities and the combatants in the path of truth and reality.

Therefore, based on this, we should always honor and respect these people in their death time just as it was done during their life time and should protect and safeguard their signs and memories. We should celebrate their birthdays and declare the day of their deaths to be the day of grief and sorrow. By holding big gatherings and delivering good and effective speeches, we should invite the people to become acquainted with their school of thought and protect and safeguard them in the future. We should respect the soil and place of their burial and prevent any kind of insult and segregation. This is because respecting their graves means respecting their school of thought just as insulting and degrading their grave is insulting their path and their conduct.

At present, anyone who steps into the cemetery of Baqi' will see that the graves of the leaders of Islam and the dear companions of the Holy Prophet (S) who self-sacrificed and endeavored hard in the propagation of religion in such a insulted and dilapidated state that it will give him a severe shock and grief and he will be astonished by the attitude of the stone-hearted Wahhabis who reckon themselves to be the propagators of religion.

This is because on the one hand they respect the names of religious leaders and companions of the Holy Prophet (S) on the pulpits and on the other hand whenever it comes to the matter of their graves, they do not pay the least respect. They do not even care about the animals contaminating the surroundings of their graves.

By using the words of *shirk* (polytheism) and *mushrik* (polytheist) as an excuse, they strike down the respect and honor of the *awliya'* and in this manner, restrain the people from honoring them in any possible manner (tongue, thoughts, expressions, actions etc.) and to the extent that they consider all these actions (in consideration of the services of the *awliya' Allah*) to be polytheism and label them as polytheists. They have such a severe enmity with the *awliya' Allah* that any kind of respect manifested towards them will very much annoy them.

Now it is time to talk and discuss about *ziyarat* of the grave of the Holy Prophet (S) from Islamic proofs and reasonings.

## Ziyarat Of The Grave Of The Holy Prophet (S)

We shall here bring forth the logical proofs from the Holy Qur'an and traditions and request the respected readers for more concentration in this section.

### Evidence From Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an commands the sinners to approach the Holy Prophet (S) and request him to seek forgiveness for them from Allah since his request and plead is accepted by Allah. The Holy verse says:

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا

***And had they, when they were unjust to themselves, come to you and asked forgiveness of Allah and the Apostle had (also) asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allah Oft-returning, Merciful. (Holy Qur'an, Surah Al-Nisa, 4:64)***

If in case we were having only one such verse, we could say that the verse is related to the day when the Holy Prophet (S) was living amongst the people. However, due to a number of reasons, we can derive from this verse, one general conclusion that it is not specific to this worldly life.

They are, firstly the verses of Qur'an that consider a *barzakhi* life<sup>1</sup> for the Prophet (S), *awliya'* and some particular group of people and introduces them as the ones who can see and hear in that world. This segment of verses will be discussed under the topic of *Tawassul* (recourse) to the Holy souls.

Secondly, the Islamic traditions (*hadiths*) clearly bear testimony to the fact that the angels transmit the messages of the people to the Holy Prophet (S). This tradition has come in *Sihah* as such:

إن رسول الله قال ما من أحدٍ يُسَلِّمُ على إلا ردَّ الله على رُوحِي حتى أُرَدَّ عليه السلام

*“The Holy Prophet (S) said: “There is no one who sends greetings upon me but that Allah makes his greetings reach me and I answer his greetings.”<sup>2</sup>*

And:

وقال رسول الله... وصلُّوا علىَّ فإنَّ صلاتكم يبلغني حيثُ كنتم

*“And said the Prophet of God (S) ..... ‘Send greetings upon me for your greetings reaches me’.”<sup>3</sup>*

Thirdly, right from the beginning, the Islamic society has grasped a general and wider meaning from this

verse (mentioned above) and acted accordingly without the demise of the Holy Prophet (S) becoming any obstacle in this regard. After the passing of the Holy Prophet (S), a group from the Arabs would come for *ziyarat* of Holy Prophet (S) with clear and pure minds and recite this verse and request him to seek forgiveness on their behalf.

Taqi Al-Din Al-Subki and Al-Samhudi have reported examples regarding it in their books *Shifa' Al-Saqam* and *Wafa' Al-Wafa'* respectively. We shall mention here some of them:

Sufyan bin 'Anbar, who is one of the learned scholars of the Shafi'i school, narrates from Al-'Utabi – that latter was standing near the grave of the Holy Prophet (S) when an Arab came and said:

السلام عليك يا رسول الله سمعت الله يقول وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا وَقَدْ جِئْتُكَ مُسْتَغْفِرًا مِنْ دُنْيِي مُسْتَشْفِعًا بِكَ إِلَى رَبِّي

*“Peace be upon you Oh Prophet of God, I have heard Allah saying (in Quran) ‘And had they, when they were unjust to themselves, come to you and asked forgiveness of Allah and the Apostle had (also) asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allah Oft-returning, Merciful’ and indeed as I have come near you, I seek forgiveness for my sins and make you intercessor towards my Lord.”*

Thereafter he cried and sought forgiveness and left the shrine of the Holy Prophet (S) after reciting this poem<sup>4</sup>:

يا خير من دُفنت بالقاع اعظمه فطاب من طيبهن القاع والاكم

نفسى الفداء بقبر انت ساكنه فيه العفاف وفيه الجود والكرم

Regarding this matter Al-Samhudi narrates from Ali (a) that: *“Three days had passed after the burial of the Holy Prophet (S). One Arab came and threw himself over the Prophet's grave and sprinkling the soil of the grave over his head said: ‘O Prophet, you spoke to us and we listened. You received from Allah what we received from you.’” One sentence which has been revealed from God is the verse:*

ولو أنهم إذا ظلموا

*“And I have done injustice to myself and I have come to you to seek forgiveness for me.”*

This action shows that the level and position which has been given to the Holy Prophet (S) by order of this verse is not limited to his life in this world but also applicable to his *barzakhi* life.

Basically, the Muslims do not consider the verses that mention about the matter of respect of the Holy Prophet (S) to be restricted to his life-time. At the time of burial of Hasan ibn Ali (a), when a section of the people had made an uproar, Husayn ibn Ali (a), immediately recited the following verse in order to silence them:

...يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ

***O you who believe! Do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet, and do not speak loud to him. (Holy Qur'an, Surah Al-Hujurat, 49:2)***

Nobody, not even the Umayyids have said that this verse and this respect is only related to the life-time of the Holy Prophet (S). At present, the Wahhabis themselves have written this verse facing the grave of the Holy Prophet (S) and put it over the wall and by this, they wish to say that we should lower our voice and not speak loudly.

Therefore, we can grasp a wider meaning from the verse and it is this, at present, the Muslims can approach the Holy Prophet (S) and request him to seek forgiveness from Allah for their sins. *Ziyarat* of the Holy Prophet (S) of Islam has no purpose other than mentioned in this *ayah* and has no parable in this regard.

This verse proves two matters:

1. After the demise of the Holy Prophet (S), it is possible to approach him and request him to seek forgiveness from Allah on one's behalf. This matter will be discussed later under the topic of "*Tawassul* (recourse) with the *Awliya' Allah*."

2. This verse is a testimony to the fact that *ziyarat* of the Holy Prophet (S) is lawful since the reality of *ziyarat* is nothing but the presence of the visitor near the visited one. If one is allowed to visit the grave of Holy Prophet (S) and request him to seek forgiveness from Allah then in fact we have performed two actions:

1. We have requested him to seek forgiveness from Allah.

2. We have, by approaching him, conversed with him and *ziyarat* possesses no reality other than this and the subject matter of *ziyarat* is mainly shaped with the same theme.

Therefore, this verse is a testimony to both these matters.

### [Another Piece Of Evidence](#)

The unanimity and consensus of the Muslims in various periods in a decree related to the commandments of Islam is the most obvious testimony upon its correctness.

Consensus over the *ziyarat* of grave of the Holy Prophet (S) is one of the better evidences of this decree. By referring to the books of tradition, *fiqh*, morals and history – especially those related to Hajj rites – the reality of this matter will be clarified.

Allama Al-Amini has narrated from forty-two Islamic sources, the recommendation of *ziyarat* of the shrine of the Holy Prophet (S). He has accurately narrated the texts and wordings of them in *Al-Ghadir*, volume 5, pages 106 to 129.

The books which we have referred to are the following:

A. *Shifa' Al-Saqam fi Ziyarat Qabr Khayr Al-Anam* written by Taqi Al-Din Al-Subki Al-Shafi'i (died in 756 A.H.). He has narrated in this book a part of the texts and wordings of the scholars.

B. *Wafa' Al-Wafa' fi Akhbar dar Al-Mustafa* written by Al-Samhudi (died in 911 A.H.). He has narrated in this book the texts and wordings of the scholars which all indicate emphatic recommendation.

C. *Al-Fiqh 'ala Al-Madhahib Al-Arba'ah* which has been written by four men from the four schools of thought and exposes the thoughts of the four Imams of *Ahl-al Sunnah* whom they follow. They have written as such:

زيارة قبر النبي أفضل المندوبات ورد فيها احاديث

“The *ziyarat* of the grave of the Prophet (S) is the principal recommendation as repeatedly found in traditions.”

Now it's time to reflect upon a section of the traditions which have been narrated by Islamic *muhaddithun* (traditionists).

## **Traditions Regarding Paying Homage To The Holy Prophet (S)**

The Islamic traditions (*hadiths*) about *ziyarat* of the Holy Prophet (S) are so many from the Sunni *muhaddithun* that we don't feel need to pay attention to their references. The great Sunni scholars from each of the sects have narrated these in their books and it shows that *ziyarat* of the shrine of the Holy Prophet (S) has been one of their indisputable matters. Now we shall narrate only a few of them as mentioning all of the traditions will lengthen our discussion.

### **First Tradition**

عن عبد الله بن عمر: من زار قبري وجبت له شفاعتي

*“Anyone who visits my grave will never be deprived of my intercession.”*

This tradition has come down in the book of *Al-Fiqh ‘ala Al-Madhahib Al-Arba’ah* in volume I page 590 and the Sunni scholars of the four schools of thought have given *fatwa* (verdict) based on them. For reference consult the book of *Wafa’ Al-Wafa’ fi Akhbar dar Al-Mustafa* vol. 4, page 1336.

Certainly, such a tradition which the scholars have recorded right from the middle of the 2nd century till now, cannot be said to be unfounded. For completion of the matter, Taqi Al-Din ‘Ali bin ‘Abd Al-Kafi Al-Subki (d. 756 A.H.) has discussed and investigated this matter and *isnad* of the traditions in his valuable book *Shifa’ Al-Saqam* on pages 3 to 11 and has proved the verity and accuracy of the methods of this tradition.

## Second Tradition

من جاءني زائراً (ولا تحمله) إلا زيارتي كان حقاً عليّ أن أكون شافعاً يوم القيامة

*“Anyone who comes to me with the intention of paying homage to me will be having a right upon me to intercede for him on the Day of Judgement”.*

Sixteen memorizers (of Qur’an) and *muhaddithun* have brought this tradition in their books and Taqi Al-Din Al-Subki (d. 756 A.H.) has discussed the narrators and *isnad* of the traditions in his book *Shifa’ Al-Saqam* page no.13. Also refer to the book *Wafa’ Al-Wafa’ fi Akhbar dar Al-Mustafa* vo1. 4, page 1340.

## Third Tradition

من حجّ فزار قبري بعد وفاتي كأن كمن زارني في حياتي

*“Anyone who visits the House of Allah and then visits my grave is like one who has visited me during my life-time.”*

This tradition has been recorded by twenty-five of the renowned *muhaddithun* and *huffaz* in their books and Taqi Al-Din ‘Ali bin ‘Abd Al-Kafi Al-Subki (d. 756 A.H.) has written extensively about the references of this tradition in his book *Shifa’ Al-Saqam*<sup>5</sup> pages 12 to 16. Also refer to *Wafa’ Al-Wafa’* volume 4, page 1340.

## Fourth Tradition

من حجّ البيت ولم يزرني فقد جفاني

“Anyone who visits the House of Allah and does not visit me has done injustice upon me.”

This tradition has been narrated by nine men from the *shuyukh* and memorizers of tradition. Also refer to *Wafa' Al-Wafa'* volume 4, page 1342.

### Fifth Tradition

من زار قبري (أو من زارتي) كنت له شفيعاً

“I will become an intercessor for anyone who pays homage to me by coming to my shrine.”

This tradition has been narrated by thirteen *muhaddithun* and *huffaz*. Refer to *Wafa' Al-Wafa'* volume 4, page 1347.

### Sixth Tradition

من زارني بعد موتي فكأنما زارني في حياتي

“Anyone who visits me after my demise is like one who has visited me during my lifetime.”

These are the examples from various traditions in which the Holy Prophet (S) has invited the people for his *ziyarat* and the number of such traditions according to research of *Al-Ghadir* amounts to twenty-two.

Al-Samhudi has collected seventeen traditions in his book *Wafa' Al-Wafa'* volume 4, pages 1336–1348 and has discussed their references in detail.

If the Holy Prophet (S) has invited the people for his *ziyarat*, it is because of a series of material and spiritual benefits which are hidden in the *ziyarat* of great Islamic personalities.

By paying homage to the grave of the Holy Prophet (S), people become acquainted with the propagation of religion of Islam and receive the correct traditions and knowledge and spread them around the world.

## Reasonings Of Wahhabis About Prohibition Of Journey Towards

### Ziyarat Of Graves

Apparently, the Wahhabis permit the *ziyarat* of the Holy Prophet (S) but do not consider the journey for *ziyarat* of graves (of others) to be permissible.

Muhammad ibn 'Abd Al-Wahhab writes in the second treatise in *Al-Rasa'il Al-Hadiyya Al-Saniyya* as follows:

تُسنُّ زيارة النبيِّ إلا أنه لا يُشدُّ الرِّحلُ إلا لزيارة المسجد والصلاة فيه

“Ziyarat of the Holy Prophet (S) is mustahab (recommended) but journey specifically undertaken for ziyarah of mosques and reciting prayer there in is not allowed.”

Their main reasoning for ziyarat being forbidden is the following tradition which has been narrated in the *Sihah*. The narrator of this tradition is Abu Hurayrah who says that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

لا تُشدُّ الرحال إلا إلى ثلاثة مساجد مسجدي هذا ومسجد الحرام ومسجد الأقصى

“The load of journey cannot be fastened except for (journey towards) three mosques – my own Mosque, Masjid Al-Haram and Masjid Al-'Aqsa.”

The text of this tradition is narrated in other wordings also and that is:

إنما يُسافر إلى ثلاثة مساجد ، مسجد الكعبة ومسجدي ومسجد ايليا

Still this text has been narrated in a third way:[6](#)

تُشدُّ الرحال إلى ثلاثة مساجد

That the tradition has come in the books of *Sihah* is not doubtful and we never dispute that its narrator is Abu Hurayrah. However what is important is to understand the context of the tradition.

Let us suppose the text of the tradition is as such:

لا تُشدُّ الرحال إلا ثلاثة مساجد

Indisputably the word of إلا is an exception and requires مستثنى منه (that from which the exception is made) and before referring to the evidences we can presume the مستثنى منه in two ways:

لا تُشدُّ إلى مسجد من المساجد إلا ثلاثة مساجد

لا تشدُّ إلى مكان من الأماكن إلا إلى ثلاثة مساجد

Understanding the context of the tradition depends on selecting one of the two assumptions.

If we assume the context of the tradition to be the first one, then in such a case it would mean that no luggage for journey will be fastened towards any mosque except these three mosques and it does not mean that (شدالرحال) is not permissible for any place even if it is not a mosque.

Anyone who fastens the luggage of journey for *ziyarat* of the Holy Prophet (S), Imams (a) and virtuous men will never be included in the prohibition of this tradition since the topic of discussion is journey (only) towards mosque and amongst all the mosques these three mosques have been excluded. But going to journey for *ziyarat* of shrines which is out of our topic of discussion is not included in this prohibition.

If we assume the context of the tradition to be the second case, it would mean that except for the journey towards these three places, all spiritual journeys are prohibited, whether the journey is for *ziyarat* of mosque or for *ziyarat* of other places.

However, by paying attention to the decisive evidences it will become clear that the context of the tradition is the same as the first one.

Firstly the مستثنى (the thing excepted) is of the three mosques; in as much as the exception is a linked exception certainly منه مستثنى will be related to the mosque and not place.<sup>7</sup>

Secondly, if the aim is prohibition of all the spiritual journeys, it will not be a correct restriction because, in the Hajj ceremonies people do (شدالرحال) and fasten their luggage for Arafat, Mash'ar and Mina. If religious journey (other than to these three places) is not allowed, then why it has been permitted for these three places?

Thirdly, journeys undertaken for *jihad* in the path of Allah, seeking knowledge, establishing bonds of relationship or visiting parents are such journeys that have been emphasized in Qur'an and traditions. Qur'an says:

فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِن كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ

***Why should not then a company from every party from among them go forth that they may apply themselves obtain understanding in religion, and that they may warn their people when they come back to them that they may be cautious? (Holy Qur'an, Surah Al-Tawbah, 9: 122)***

Therefore great research scholars have interpreted the tradition in the way which we have mentioned.

Al-Ghazali in his book *Ihya' 'Ulum Al-din* says:

*“The second type of journey is to go on journey for worship like journey for jihad, hajj, ziyarat of the grave of Holy Prophet (S), his companions and the awliya’.*

*Anyone whose ziyarat is the source of tabarruk during life-time will also be the same during his death-*

time and *شد الرجال* for these motives is no problem and is not contradictory to the tradition which prohibits *شد الرجال* (other than the three mosques).

This is because the matter under discussion is about the mosques and since other mosques are all equal as far as superiority is concerned it is said that journey towards these mosques is not permitted. However, if we overlook the matter of mosques, the *ziyarat* of Prophets and *awliya'* are having a great virtue although they possess ranks and grades.”<sup>8</sup>

Therefore what is prohibited is *شد رجال* towards the mosques (other than the three mosques) and not “*شد رجال*” for *ziyarat* and or other spiritual works.

Here we don't have an alternative but to mention that when the Holy Prophet (S) says that no luggage can be fastened for other than the three mosques, it does not mean *شد رجال* is forbidden (*haram*). Instead it means that it is not having any merit that a person fastens his luggage towards them and takes the trouble of visiting them as all the mosques (other than the three mosques) are not having any difference as far as their superiority is concerned. The general mosque, the district mosque and the community mosque are all having equal rewards; it is needless that with the presence of the general mosque in a near locality a person fastens his luggage for the general mosque situated in another far-away locality. But it does not mean that if he does so, his action will be *haram* and his journey will be a sinful one.

The proof of this matter is what the writers of *Sihah* and *Sunans* narrate that the Holy Prophet (S) and his companions would visit Masjid Quba on Saturdays and recite prayer at that place. Here is the text of *Sahih Al-Bukhari*:

إن النبي كان يأتي مسجد قباء كل سبت ماشياً وراكباً وإن ابن عمر كان يفعل كذلك

“The Holy Prophet (S) used to go for *ziyarat* of Masjid Quba on every Saturday either on foot or on a mount. The son of 'Umar too would do the same.”<sup>9</sup>

Fundamentally, how can travelling distances for performing *salat* for Allah in one of the divine mosques without the least taint of sham be considered as *haram* and unlawful? While establishing prayers in mosque is *mustahab* (recommended) its preliminary steps too, as a rule, will take the same color.

1. Barzakh designates a place separating the living from the hereafter; a veil between the dead and their return to world of the living, but also to a phase happening between death and resurrection. For more detailed description, refer to the book 'The Hereafter (Ma'ad)' by Sayyid Abdul Husayn Dastghaib Shirazi. Online at:

<https://www.Al-islam.org/hereafter-maad-sayyid-abdul-husayn-dastghaib-sh...> [1]

2. Sunan Abu Dawud, vol. 1 p. 470–471, book of Hajj chapter: زيارة القبور

3. Sheikh Mansur Ali Nasif, Al-Taj Al-Jami' li Al-'Usul fi Ahadith Al-Rasul, vol. 2, p. 189

4. Wafa' Al-Wafa' fi Akhbar dar Al-Mustafa, vol. 4, p. 1361.

5. It is the best book that has been written by any of the Sunni writers against the fatwa (verdict) of Ibn Taymiyyah

regarding the prohibition of journey for ziyarat of the Holy Prophet's grave.

[6.](#) These three texts have been narrated by Muslim in his Sahih vol. 4, page 126 book of Hajj, chapter of لا تشد الرحال. It can also be found in Sunan Abu Dawud, vol. 1, page 469, book of Hajj and Sunan Al-Nasa'i with Sharh of Al-Suyuti vol. 2, pages 37-38.

[7.](#) If someone says: "ما جائي الأزيد", then we have to say that مستثنى منه is the word for human-beings and its like for example tribe etc. and it is not referring to a more comprehensive meaning by the name of "things" and "existence" which is either human-beings or other things.

[8.](#) Ihya' 'Ulum Al-din, book 'Etiquette Of Going To Journey' vol. 2, p. 247. (Published by Dar Al-Ma'rufah, Beirut). Also in Al-Fatawa Al-Kubra, vol. 2, p. 24 by Ibn Taymiyyah.

[9.](#) Sahih Al-Bukhari, vol. 2, p. 76. Sahih Muslim (with commentary of Al-Nawawi) vol. 9, pp. 169-171; Sunan Al-Nasa'i (with commentary of Al-Suyuti) vol. 2, p. 37.

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